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ABSTRACT

Findings of a study to determine which books are recommended as required readings for educational administration students are presented in this paper. Surveys were mailed to 275 educational administration department chairs, asking them to list up to 10 books other than textbooks suitable for required graduate reading. Fifty-five completed surveys were returned. Of the 308 titles submitted, little agreement existed among respondents. A Cochran Q test determined statistical differences among the surveys according to the type of graduate degree offered by the institution. A list of 22 titles was developed for each of the following categories of institutions: overall; master's/education specialist; and doctoral granting. Five titles appear on all three lists. The list of 22 titles is recommended as a basic library of readings for students in educational administration/leadership. Five tables are included. (24 references) (LMI)

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Readings in Educational Administration: Coming to Consensus on the Top Ten Books Recommended For Educational Administration Students

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Abstract

A study was conducted to determine the titles that should be included in a library of required readings for educational administration/leadership students. Surveys were sent to 275 department chairs with 55 returns. The surveys yielded a list of 308 books other than textbooks that were recommended as required reading. A Cochran Q was conducted to determine if there was a difference among the surveys, and it was found that there was a statistical difference.

A List of the top books for each category of Overall, Master's/Educational Specialist, and Doctoral granting institutions was developed. There were 22 titles among the three lists, with 5 titles appearing on all three lists. It was determined that the list of 22 titles should be a basic library of readings for students in educational administration/leadership

Readings in Educational Administration: Coming to Consensus on the Top Ten Books Recommended for Educational Administration Students

Since 1983, education reform has impacted all areas of education from curriculum to how schools were led. In the area of educational administration many changes have occurred that have taken the role of school administrators from an essentially authoritarian position to that of manager and instructional leader. As these changes have occurred, programs that led to administrative certification have had to adjust the curricula to meet those needs.

One adjustment was in the kinds of readings required of educational administrators. A search of the literature did not yield any sources that produced a list of supplemental readings for educational administration. One study was completed in biology. Mayer and Carter (1988) conducted a study dealing with the use of books other than textbooks used in the teaching of biology. They found that over 276 books other than textbooks were recommended for reading by biology students by 77 of their colleagues. Mayer and Carter believed that in order to be sure that their students were reading the latest and most accurate information on biology, that their students needed to be reading beyond textbooks in order to get beyond the ". . . intellectual shallowness . . ." (p. 490) resulting from the use of textbooks.

Over the past ten years, a large number of books written primarily for the business community have made their way into educational administration reading lists. The content of these books was interpreted

to be applicable for use in the educational community and the recommended processes applied to educational administration and leadership. However, with the rapid rate of change, and the large number of books that have appeared on the market that dealt with leadership, it has been difficult at times to sort out the best books for use in educational administration/leadership readings. Essentially, educational administration/leadership faculty did not have the time to read every possible book that could be used as a resource and therefore relied on colleagues recommendations, or stayed with a favorite book.

Faculty members in the Department of Educational Administration at Northwest Missouri State University were attempting to develop a reading library and list of recommended books for students in administration. The difficulty was trying to determine which books should receive the highest recommendation for reading given the limitations of budget and time to research. It was decided to conduct a study to develop a consensus of what books should constitute required reading in educational administration.

Problem Statement:

What are the books other than textbooks that should be recommended reading by students in educational administration and educational leadership programs?

Sub-Problem:

Is there a relationship between the graduate degrees offered by the institution and the books that are listed?

Method:

A questionnaire was developed that asked chairs of departments of educational administration/leadership to list up to ten books other than textbooks that they would consider to be required reading for students in educational administration/leadership. In addition, demographic questions were included to gather information about the number of students enrolled in educational administration/leadership and the degrees offered by the institution.

A questionnaire was sent to the chair or division head of departments of educational administration and leadership at 275 member institutions of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) that listed graduate programs in educational administration/leadership. A business reply envelope was enclosed with each survey, and the respondents were asked to return them within three weeks of the mailing.

The data collected by the survey were compiled using a spread sheet program. The data were treated using a Cochran Q to determine if there was a significant relationship between the responses listed by all respondents, and those offering masters, specialist and doctoral degrees. The ten highest ranking books were identified for all respondents, those offering only masters degree programs, those offering educational specialist programs, and doctoral institutions.

Data Analysis:

Of the 275 surveys mailed, 55 were completed and returned. Respondents listed from 1 to 50 books on each survey. Whenever the number of books listed exceeded 10, the list was reviewed for textbooks,

and those were eliminated. All other books were then retained. The respondents listed a total of 308 separate books other than textbooks as recommended or required reading for educational administration/leadership students.

Of the 55 surveys that were returned, 12 were from institutions that offered only a Master's degree, and 13 from institutions offering Educational Specialist degrees, with or without a Master's degree. Doctoral granting institutions comprised 26 of the respondents, with 4 respondents not answering the item.

Using the formula listed by Siegel (1956), a Cochran Q was calculated for all surveys, and by degrees offered. This test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in the results of the questionnaire between respondents. The test revealed that the returned surveys did differ significantly from each other ($p<.05$). When the same comparison was conducted by degree offered, it was found that there was no significant difference between the responses between masters institutions, and between specialists institutions ($p>.05$) However, there was significant difference between doctoral institutions ($p<.05$).

Table 1

Results of Cochran Q Analysis

All Respondents:

Cochran Q = 85.5972 df = 54 p = .0099

Masters Degree Institutions:

Cochran Q = 3.61194 df = 11 p = .9391

Educational Specialists (may also offer Masters Degree):

Cochran Q = 8.46377 df = 12 p = .7113

Doctoral Institutions (also may offer Masters and Specialists Degrees):

Cochran Q = 65.92785 df = 25 p < .005

The following books were the top ten books listed by all survey returns, those with Master's and/or Educational Specialist, and institutions with doctoral programs. The list totals for both Master's only and Master's with Ed.S. degrees were combined due to the large number of entries appearing on only 2 surveys. Because of tied responses, each list exceeded 10 books, and 22 separate books were included among the 3 lists. Complete bibliographic information was listed in the reference section of this paper.

Table 2

Ranking of Recommended Books by All Respondents

Author	Short Title	No. Lists
Goodlad	A Place called School	13
Peters and Waterman	In Search of Excellence	11
Machiavelli	The Prince	9
Gardner	On Leadership	8
Sergiovanni	Value Added Leadership	8
Sizer	Horace's Compromise	7
Bennis and Nanus	Leaders: The Strategies of Taking Charge	7
Schlechty	Schools for the 21st Century	7
Barth	Improving Schools from Within	6
Covey	Seven Habits of Highly Effective People	6
Bennis	Why Leaders Can't Lead	6

Table 3

Ranking of Books by Master's/Specialists Degree Granting Institutions

Author	Short Title	No. Listed
Goodlad	A Place called School	8
Peters and Waterman	In Search of Excellence	7
Sizer	Horace's Compromise	6
Bennis and Nanus	Leaders: The Strategies of Taking Charge	6
Lewis	Restructuring America's Schools	5
Naisbitt and Auberdeen	Megatrends Two Thousand	5
Wolcott	The Man in the Principal's Office	5
Covey	Seven Habits of Highly Effective People	5
Barnard	Functions of the Executive	4
Gardner	On Leadership	4
Machiavelli	The Prince	4
Sergiovanni	Value Added Leadership	4
Bennis	Why Leaders Can't Lead	4

Table 4

Ranking of books by Doctorate Granting Institutions

Author	Short Title	No. Listed
Goodlad	A Place called School	5
Sizer	Horace's Compromise	4
Peters and Waterman	In Search of Excellence	4
Jacobson and Conway	Educational Leadership in an Age of Reform	3
Boyer	High School	3
Barth	Improving Schools from Within	3
Bennis and Nanus	Leaders: The Strategies of Taking Charge	3
Burns	Leadership	3
Hersey and Blanchard	Management of Organizational Behavior	3
Foster	Paradigms and Promises	3
Schlechty	Schools for the 21st Century	3
Kanter	Change Masters	3
Black and English	What they Don't Tell You In Schools of Educ	3
Bennis	Why Leaders Can't Lead	3

The list totals yielded 5 books that appeared on all three: A Place Called School, In Search of Excellence, Horace's Compromise, Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge, and Why Leaders Can't Lead. Three books appeared only on the Master's/Educational Specialists list: Megatrends Two Thousand, Restructuring America's Schools, and The Man in the Principal's Office. The doctoral list yielded 7 books appearing only on that list: Educational Leadership in an Age of Reform, High School, Leadership, Management of Organizational Behavior, Paradigms and Promises, The Change Masters, and What They Don't Tell You in Schools of Education.

The final top selections of the Master's/Specialists list shared 10 titles with the overall listing, 83 titles appeared on fewer than 4 lists submitted by Master's/Specialists institutions. The doctoral lists included 178 titles among the lists, however, 154 of those titles appeared once among the lists submitted. Of the top selections, 7 appeared on the overall top listing.

Discussion:

The data gathered by this study suggested that there was little agreement among the lists submitted as to what should constitute recommended required reading for students in educational administration. Of the 308 titles submitted for this study, a few appear to have the consensus of at least 10% of the respondents, those texts listed as the overall top texts appearing on at least 6 lists. If only two books were to be recommended, it appeared that A Place Called School and In Search of Excellence would be the two selected with each appearing on at least 20% of the lists.

Because of the large number of texts recommended by doctoral institutions, it was difficult to establish some consensus, or comparison with the other lists. The doctoral lists, however, did include more books from business and industry than did the Master's/Specialists list, suggesting that the doctoral institutions may have been more aligned with a business management approach to educational administration than the other institutions. The books appearing on the Master's/Specialists lists appeared to be more aligned with the mechanics of school administration and school reform than did the doctoral lists.

Based upon these findings it would be recommended that with a limited budget for the development of a reading library, or because of the financial limitations of graduate study that the following books be considered basic reading for educational administration students based upon the appearance of these books on the overall list, and both Master's/Specialists and Doctoral lists:

Table 5

Books Appearing on All Top Book Lists

Author	Short Title	Overall Lists
Goodlad	A Place called School	13
Peters and Waterman	In Search of Excellence	11
Sizer	Horace's Compromise	7
Bennis and Nanus	Leaders: The Strategies of Taking Charge	7
Bennis	Why Leaders Can't Lead	6

A broader reading library should have included all the books appearing on the overall list. Without purchasing all 308 books, it appeared from the study that the most complete reasonable library should have included the 22 titles appearing on the three top lists.

There did seem to be limited consensus on the top books recommended for reading by educational administration/leadership students. In addition, there did seem to be some relationship between the degree offered by the institution and the books recommended.

Recommendations:

1. This study should be replicated using a different sample. The time of year and the actual respondent should be considered. This study took place during the Spring semester near mid-term and break time. The surveys should be sent to faculty members in each department besides the chair since it was possible that the chair of the department was not directly involved in instruction.
2. This study should be replicated using a stratified sample to ensure a better response from institutions offering master's, specialists, and doctoral degrees.

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